



Deputy Paul McAuliffe,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Dublin 2.

8th February 2021

PQ Ref: 9239/21 To ask the Minister for Health the reason for not allowing general practitioners to carry out vaccinations in larger facilities, for example, in local sports halls; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Paul McAuliffe

Dear

I refer to your recent parliamentary question which was passed to the HSE for response.

In relation to the use of mRNA vaccines for over 70s (Cohort 3), the HSE worked closely with the IMO, as the representative body for General Practice, on developing an alternative approach and plan to ensure safe and effective distribution and administration of the vaccine as early as possible to over 70s.

The plan having been agreed with the IMO was incorporated in the overall HSE operational model and guidance, which was developed through a collaborative process involving a working group with senior HSE clinical and management input, together with IMO and ICGP representation. Having regard to the clinical and operational parameters involved and following discussion with the IMO, 3 distribution models were agreed. In the majority of circumstances patients will be vaccinated at their own GP surgery – however arrangements have also been made for a number of GP Vaccine Clinics e.g. Helix DCU, Merlin Park Galway and MTU in Cork. Arrangements have also been made for a buddy up system where some practices will partner together in delivering to their patients over 70.

This model has been effectively deployed in collaboration with the IMO and general practice and commenced the week of the 15th March beginning with the over 85s.

Due to the clinical, operational and logistical exigencies given the nature of the vaccine there are a range of transportation, storage, delivery and security considerations around the vaccines which have been taken into account and which require the vaccines to be delivered within the model as set out if the HSE are to be in a position to assure consistently safe and effective distribution and administration of the vaccine. In this context it has not been possible to facilitate the accommodation of requests for deployment of clinics in local sports halls and centres notwithstanding our recognition of the motivation and good intentions of all involved.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul McAuliffe'.

National Director,
Community Strategy & Planning